

ACNR spreads drugs, terror in Guerrero

Name of group: Revolutionary National Civic Association (ACNR). Also appears as the Peasant Organization of the Southern Sierra (OCSS).

Headquarters: Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico; Iguala, Acapulco and Tlapa, Guerrero.

Founded: January 1983.

Locations of operations, areas active: The state of Guerrero, along the Pacific Coast of Mexico. This state is divided by the Balsas River. The concentration of guerrilla activity is in the area known as the Upper Balsas, bordering southern Puebla state and northern Oaxaca state, which forms what is known as the "Mixteco Knot" (conjunction of the Western Sierra Madre with the Eastern Sierra Madre). Also along the Balsas River basin, from the Mixteco Knot to the outlet of that river, which forms the border between Guerrero and Michoacán states, where the Lázaro Cárdenas-Las Truchas steel complex is located.

From the Michoacán-Guerrero border, along the Pacific Coast, to the port of Acapulco (which is known as the Great Coast of Guerrero). From Acapulco port, along the Pacific Coast to the southeast, to the border with Oaxaca state, an area known as the Small Coast.

Major terrorist actions: On June 28, 1995, members of the OCSS attacked police, when stopped at a roadblock; 17 members were killed in the resulting shoot-out.

Modus operandi: From April 1987 to 1990, they have carried out innumerable "civic" actions (seizures of mayoral offices, some with armed cadre; picket lines; meetings; university strikes; etc.) against state governor José Francisco Ruiz Massieu. Since 1989, these activities were staged under the name of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD).

From 1993 through today, under the governorship of Rubén Figueroa Alcócer, terrorist activity has notably increased, characterized by ambushes of police personnel, assassinations of municipal authorities, and attacks on peasant groups not allied to their movement.

Leaders' names and aliases: Founders include: Santos Méndez Bailón, Ismael and José Bracho Campos, Demóstenes Onofre Lozano Valdovinos, Antonio Sotelo Pérez (all belonging to the Peasant Execution Brigade of the Revolutionary Civic Association of Genaro Vázquez); Enrique Lavada Ruiz, Octaviano Santiago Dionisio, Ramón and Francisco Juventino, and Alfredo Camapana López (all belonging to the Armed Revolutionary People's Front, or FRAP, which operated in Jalisco during the 1970s); Tecua Salas, leader of "500 Years of Indian, Black and People's Resistance."

Groups allied to nationally or internationally:

Nationally: PRD; Workers Revolutionary Party (PRT); EZLN; Revolutionary Clandestine Workers Party-Popular Unity (PROCUP); Party of the Poor (PDLP); Emiliano Zapata Front; "All Rights for Everyone" Network; Emiliano Zapata Worker/Peasant Union (UOCEZ); Democratic Union of Transport Workers (UTD); Emiliano Zapata Revolutionary Agrarian League (LAREZ); Popular Defense Committee (CDP); Sixth of March Movement; Union of Mexico's National Autonomous University Workers (Stunam); "Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez" Human Rights Center; Union of Autonomous University of Guerrero Workers (STUAG); Student Federation, Guerrero University (FEUG).

The ACNR is supported by several "civilian" groups in Guerrero, which it set up itself: the Southern Coordinator for Peace and Democracy; Human Rights Commission "Voice of the Voiceless," Coyuca de Benítez; Guerrero Council for 500 Years of Indian, Black and People's Resistance; Nahua Council of Upper Balsas; Coalition of Collective Farms of Guerrero's Great Coast; Guerrero Student Union; Emiliano Zapata Southern Agrarian Revolutionary League.

Internationally: Cuban Communist Party; Amerindian Studies of Quebec, Canada; Coordinator of Indian Agencies and Nations of the Continent (CONIC); Peru's Shining Path.

Religious/ideological/ethnic motivating ideology: Communists and Zapatistas ("we fight for the land, and also for power"); see historical profile, below.

Known controllers/mentors/theoreticians: Cuban Communist Party; Lucio Cabañas (guerrilla founder of the Party of the Poor which operated in Guerrero from 1969 to 1979); Genaro Vázquez Rojas (guerrilla founder of the Revolutionary Civic Association of Guerrero, which operated from 1969 to 1971).

Training: ACNR founders lived in exile in Cuba from 1972 to 1983. They trained in producing explosives, guerrilla tactics, and acts of mass terrorism. It is not confirmed whether they physically participated in the Cuban Army's legions in Angola, but they had the same kind of military training. Training camps and the hideouts of armed groups have been discovered in various Guerrero areas. Former members of the Route 100 Urban Transport Workers Union (Sutaur) have handed over evidence to the federal Attorney General's office which establishes that this union and the Independent Proletarian Movement (MPI) bought up land in this region which was adapted for guerrilla training.

Known drug connections: Guerrero state holds first place in the nation in the cultivation of poppy and in the production of opium gum, the base for the production of heroin. According to reports from the Ninth Military Region, 1995 is the year during which the most narcotics crops have ever been destroyed, and yet, more poppy is being found in ever larger areas. The same is happening with marijuana, which is being sown in increasingly more visible areas. This is a territory of drug trafficker Arellano Félix, who operates

in alliance with the opium mafias of Thailand.

According to reports from the Attorney General's office, plantings have increased along the Tenango mountain range, from which a great number of Balsas River tributaries flow. Poppy cultivation also extends toward the Upper Balsas, as well as in the Mixteca region of Oaxaca. These are the same areas of concentration of the ACNR guerrilla and of the operations of the Nahua Council of Upper Balsas, an "indigenist" organization linked to the EZLN.

Reports from the Guerrero state government and from the Ninth Military Region indicate that the number of 10- to 12-year-old children who are being arrested in the camps where the poppies are milked (Asian-style) is growing.

Marijuana cultivation is spreading along the Guerrero Great Coast and in the so-called Small Coast, where guerrilla training camps have been detected.

Known arms suppliers/routes: Probably through the drug trade and organized crime in the United States. A Feb. 8, 1994 memorandum from the Mexican Defense Ministry talks about an "imminent shipment of 2,000 AK-47 assault rifles, which will be sent from that country [the United States] to national territory." This shipment is part, says the memorandum, of "a larger shipment of nearly 20,000 weapons of this type, destined for the state of Guerrero." The report adds information that "allows one to presume the possibility of drug trafficking and general criminal activity that could be confused with a budding subversion."

The arms-contraband corridor is the same as that for opium gum traffic running from Guerrero to clandestine laboratories in the state of Nayarit (where clandestine arsenals have been found) and in the state of Sonora.

Known political supporters/advocates: The same support networks as for the EZLN (see EZLN profile).

Known funding: Drug trade, robberies, assaults, and kidnappings. Administration of restaurants and brothels in Acapulco and Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo.

Thumbnail historical profile: In January 1993, an amnesty by the government of José López Portillo (1976-82) permitted the return from Cuba of Santos Méndez Bailón, Ismael and José Bracho Campos, Demóstenes Onofre Lozano Valdovinos, and Antonio Sotelo Pérez. These men, belonging to the Peasant Execution Brigade of the guerrilla movement of Genaro Vázquez Rojas, had gone into exile in 1972, after the death of Vázquez Rojas. Their departure was protected by Cuernavaca Bishop Sergio Méndez Arceo.

The reception committee was composed of: Alvarez Icaza of Cencos (see EZLN profile); Graco Ramírez and Rafael Talamantes, then leaders of the Socialist Workers Party (PST); María Teresa Ulloa, leader of the Workers Union of the College of Mexico; Jaime Neri Ramírez, then director of the Teachers College and of personnel at the Autonomous University of Guerrero. This committee was the same which was enrolling Mexican youth to help in the reconstruction of Nicaragua after the victory of the Sandinistas.

Other members of the reception committee included: Enrique Laviada Ruiz, Octaviano Santiago Dionisio, Ramón and Francisco Juventino, and Alfredo Camapana López. These were all members of the Armed Revolutionary People's Front (FRAP), which operated in Jalisco in the 1970s together with the FER of Carlos Ramírez Ladewing. They, too, had received the benefit of José López Portillo's amnesty.

Upon their return, the exiles held meetings at the Teachers College with teachers and students, who created the National Coordinator of Education Workers (CENTE), where the ACNR declared itself formally established. During their visit to Chilpancingo, Guerrero, they held a meeting in the Number 2 High School of Iguala, where they were received by Félix Salgado Macedonio, at the time the leader of the student body there (today, Salgado Macedonio is a PRD senator). It was in this school that the exiles declared, "Perhaps we are too old to take up arms, but we have ideas. The fight begun by Genaro Vázquez is not over."

Teachers and university officials from the Autonomous University of Guerrero came to Chilpancingo, taking over the law school of the university then located at Calle Abasolo No. 33, in Chilpancingo. Between 1983 and 1985, they also controlled the rectory of that same university, forcing out PRDer Wences Reza and imposing José Enrique González Ruiz, who turned out to be an activist of Procup-PDLP.

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